United Nations A/C.5/63/SR.49

General Assembly
Sixty-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General
25 June 2009

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 49th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 28 May 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Bródi ..... (Hungary)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Ms. McLurg

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09-35204 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 144: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (A/63/520, A/63/689 and Corr.1 and A/63/746/Add.11)

Agenda item 139: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (*continued*) (A/63/562 and A/63/746/Add.12)

1. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Controller), introducing the performance report on the budget of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (A/63/520), said that the total approved budget for UNIFIL for 2007/08 had been $713,586,800. Expenditure had amounted to $591,589,000, leaving an unencumbered balance of $121,997,800, for a utilization rate of 82.9 per cent. The variance was attributable mainly to delayed deployment of military personnel and equipment, delayed recruitment of staff, reduced requirements for construction services and reimbursements for self-sustainment, and the deployment of a smaller number of vessels and helicopters by the Maritime Task Force and its subsequent reconfiguration in March 2008.

2. The General Assembly was invited to decide on the treatment of the unencumbered balance of $121,997,800 with respect to the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 and to decide on the treatment of other income for the period ended 30 June 2008 amounting to $32,293,700.

3. Introducing the proposed budget for UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 (A/63/689 and Corr.1), he said that the approved budget for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 had been $650,755,600, while the proposed budget for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 was $646,580,400, for a decrease of $4,175,200. The variance was attributable primarily to reduced requirements under military contingents and the acquisition of fewer vehicles, replacement items and communications equipment, offset in part by additional provisions under facilities and infrastructure and under international and national staffing.

4. The General Assembly was invited to appropriate the amount of $646,580,400 for the maintenance of the Force for the 12-month period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, assess the amount of $107,763,400 for the period from 1 July to 31 August 2009 and assess an additional $538,817,000 for the period from 1 September 2009 to 30 June 2010 should the Security Council decide to continue the mandate of the Force.

5. Introducing the performance report on the budget of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (A/63/562), he said that the approved budget had been $113,483,400. Expenditure had amounted to $106,085,200, leaving an unencumbered balance of $7,398,200, for a utilization rate of 93.5 per cent. The variance was attributable mainly to lower fuel consumption and lower requirements for mission subsistence allowance for military observers, offset in part by increased transportation requirements and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/276, payment of mission subsistence allowance to staff officers in lieu of reimbursement to troop-contributing Governments.

6. Cash available in the Special Account for UNMEE as at 30 June 2008 had amounted to $27,062,500 and cash required to cover total liabilities recorded as at the same date in the Mission's accounts had amounted to $28,526,900, resulting in a cash shortfall of $1,464,400. That shortfall would not permit the return to Member States of credits due to them from the 2007/08 financial period.

7. The General Assembly was invited to take note of the total amount of $17,611,400 comprising the unencumbered balance of $7,398,200 with respect to the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 and other income for the period ended 30 June 2008 amounting to $10,213,200. It was also invited to defer to its sixty-fourth session a decision on the treatment of the amount of $17,611,400, which represented the credits due to Member States from the 2007/08 financial period.

8. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's related report on the financing of UNIFIL (A/63/746/Add.11), said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of $36,817,400 in the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 (A/63/689 and Corr.1). In its hearings on the financing of UNIFIL, the Advisory Committee had been given a revised troop deployment schedule. On the basis of that schedule, it had

determined that a delayed deployment factor of 15 per cent was more realistic than the 12 per cent that had been indicated in the proposed budget. Given that the increase in the delayed deployment factor would result in a reduction of $8,388,000 in the requirements for military contingents, the Advisory Committee recommended that the requirements for military personnel should be reduced accordingly. The application of a higher delayed deployment factor would also result in a related reduction of $8,598,900 for contingent-owned equipment.

9. The Advisory Committee had also been informed that, on the basis of the vacancy data reported as at 31 January 2009, delayed deployment factors of 17 per cent for international and 18 per cent for national staff were more realistic than the 15 per cent that had been budgeted. It had been further informed that the increase in the delayed deployment factor would involve a reduction of $2,794,100 in the requirements for civilian personnel for 2009/10. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the requirements for civilian personnel in the amount of $100,409,400 should be reduced by $2,794,100.

10. The Advisory Committee had also been informed that, in view of the delayed deployment of vessels and aircraft for the Maritime Task Force, the proposal for naval transportation could have been overestimated. It therefore recommended that the resources proposed for naval transportation for 2009/10 should be reduced by 20 per cent, to $60,209,000.

11. As it had done for other peacekeeping operations, the Advisory Committee recommended that the average fuel cost for the period from January to March 2009 should be used as the basis for estimating the requirements for fuel during the period 2009/10, entailing a reduction of $2,074,200.

12. Introducing the Advisory Committee's related report on the financing of UNMEE (A/63/746/Add.12), she said that the Advisory Committee had been informed that, as at 30 April 2009, outstanding assessed contributions for the Mission had totalled $17,450,000.

13. Bearing in mind the Mission's cash shortfall of $14.7 million as at 30 April 2009, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the total amount of $17,611,400, comprising the unencumbered balance of $7,398,200 with respect to the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 and other income for the period ended 30 June 2008 amounting to $10,213,200, and that the Assembly should defer to its sixty-fourth session a decision on the treatment of the total amount of $17,611,400.

14. **Mr. Diab** (Syrian Arab Republic) drew attention to paragraph 16 of the Advisory Committee's report on the financing of UNIFIL (A/63/746/Add.11), in which the Advisory Committee requested the Secretary-General to carry out a review of the financing and administrative support arrangements of the Observer Groups with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and UNIFIL. Recalling that the Advisory Committee had made the same recommendation in its report on the financing of UNDOF (A/63/746/Add.2, para. 32), he said that he was puzzled by the Advisory Committee's insistence in respect of that matter, particularly since the General Assembly had not accepted that very same recommendation when it had been made at the Assembly's sixty-second session in the Advisory Committee's report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/62/781, para. 28).

15. Pointing out that the Advisory Committee could only make recommendations, not requests, he said that he felt compelled to raise the issue at the current meeting because the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had not made herself available for informal consultations in that regard.

16. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in its consideration of the financing of UNDOF and UNIFIL, the Advisory Committee had become aware of the high level of support that both Forces provided to the Observer Groups of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), which had led it to wonder whether the administrative and logistical arrangements in place were as cost-efficient as possible. Its recommendation had been made from a purely budgetary perspective and did not represent an attempt to pass judgement on that aspect of the missions' financing. The intent had merely been to point out to the Secretary-General that both the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly needed a better understanding of those long-standing arrangements and that he should review them and determine whether it was necessary to consider alternative arrangements for the financial support of the Observer Groups.

17. She would make herself available for informal consultations with any delegation that wished to discuss the matter.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.